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Editor

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Contents Vol. VIII, No. 2

PAGE

I. *The Morale of the Minister* 3
THE REV. GRAHAM R. HODGES

II. *A Serviceman's Question* 4
THE REV. GRAFTON M. THOMAS

III. *On Being Excited in the Pulpit* 8
DR. JOSEPH NOVOTNY

IV. *My Fifty Years in the Ministry* 9
THE REV. LEON H. AUSTIN

V. *An Installation Paper* 13
THE REV. KENNETH O. EATON

VI. *Television and Religion* 17
YALE UNIVERSITY NEWS BUREAU

VII. *God's Righteousness—FSB* 18

VIII. *The Evil of the Eleven O'clock Service* . . . 20
MR. D. R. EVANS

IX. *Concerning Time in Its Flight* 22
THE EDITOR

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The Morale of the Minister

The Rev. Graham R. Hodges
Ticonderoga, New York

NOTHING affects a church more directly than the morale of the minister—his outlook, his feelings, his attitude toward his post, his people, and toward life in general. No other job places more dependence on the inner state of a single person. His inner condition, outwardly manifested, can make or break the institution he serves.

Without undue self-pity or pride we might say that the minister must be the well spring of religious optimism and faith if these elements shall exist in the community at all. He cannot furnish the Water of Life, but he must furnish the pump-priming necessary to get others' spiritual pumps operating. For if he, the man supposedly in frequent and direct contact with God, gets blue and pessimistic what hope is there for other people? "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Other positions of leadership require a high state of confidence and a positive regard for limited objectives. True enough, many professional, business, and political leaders have more exacting tasks than the minister. But often their goals are more easily attained or measured. In business, figures "in the black" give a final answer to any question about success. In politics, victory at the polls gives the answer. But the minister must have for himself and provide for others a dynamic faith in an intangible God and an undying love for incorrigible human beings, factors without final proof or success in this world.

As an Olympic contestant keeps in trim all four years, so the minister must always be in good spiritual condition. Summer vacation will not tide him over until next July unless he has an immediate, daily source of renewal. In addition to physical fitness, his job requires mental and spiritual toughness. If he is an active pastoral worker the small drains take toll. In and out of home and hospital, the hem of his garment is touched. In preparing and delivering a sermon worthy of being called "the Gospel" he must spend and be spent.

I

In the highly diplomatic work among church organizations he must hold aloft ultimate aims while achieving immediate objectives. In keeping the local church going forward he, of all members, must have a faith in its future and in the present membership. As he works with Mr. Smith he must give him a faith in Mr. Jones, in the local church, in the Holy Catholic Church, in mankind at large (even the Russians), and in almighty God.

Neither a Rotarian optimism nor a Barthian defeatism is the minister's forte. His is the realism which accepts the grimmest facts of life and yet retains an ultimate faith in mankind, including Mrs. Brown, the worst gossip in town. When his members all have television and can't give to Missions he presents Missions from the pulpit with more vigor than ever. When everybody but the pastor gets a cost-of-living salary increase, he still believes in the prime necessity of his job and feels it a high privilege to speak of the highest and Holiest concepts ever given to man.

The minister is expected to radiate confidence when he enters a home, walks down Main Street, or into the pulpit. He is a purveyor of Good News. True,

one of the ministerial characteristics most detested by laymen (according to some survey I read) is an overhearty smile-voice-handshake combination. Naturally, we all detect and despise such a front in any profession. But the man of God *is* expected to be a living example of faith and final optimism despite personal troubles and public ills.

Pessimism is not necessarily realism, present trends in literature notwithstanding. Of all people in the world's history the early Christians had reason for long faces. Their friends were being flogged and tossed to the lions. Most of the world's people were slaves. Corruption and cruelty were the rule, not the exception. Through it all they maintained a singing optimism. The minister of that same Gospel which cheered the early Christians should have the same spirit as they. If he turns pessimist he had better get a job teaching Philosophy, where he can turn his gloom into brilliantly depressing lectures, or else turn ditch digger, where the clay doesn't care.

During the last war I was a member and the director of a conscientious objector camp located in the cut-over lands of northern Michigan. Problems of morale were terrific. Over 150 men, ready to die rather than be killed, were cutting brush and pulling weeds. The long winters and isolation made things worse. Once an Army colonel came to inspect the camp property. As we discussed various camp problems we talked about the morale of the men. I asked him then: "And what about the camp director's morale?" He replied: "Sir, the director is not supposed to have morale!"

II

Nor does the Christian minister have the right to morale if we mean the privilege of feeling forever gloomy, depressed, fearful of his own and the world's future, self-pitying, wildly cheerful over personal achievements, envious of others' affluent status, anxious over the future of Christ's church. He has no right to feel other than great faith in God, and even in the meanest parishoner, for whom Christ gave his body and blood. Having taken up the Cross and followed Him, the luxury of variant feelings should be abandoned.

Should this seem unfair, let us remember that God offers strength according to our needs. In our secret closet is the Living Water, never failing. At a prayer's reach is the Bread of Life. "Ask and it shall be given you."

"Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

A Serviceman's Question

The Rev. Grafton M. Thomas
Berlin Heights, Ohio

THE past week I received a letter from one of the boys in service who lives in a neighboring community. He had recently returned to his post after a visit home. I want to share part of his letter with you and also the answer, which I, as a minister of Christ, sent back to him. Before I quote his words, let me remind you that the world in which he lives is stripped of most of its pretensions. It is an hourly facing of life and death, of lonelines and anxiety. His first words reveal that our world is different:

"It still is hard to get used to the American people again. They all seem so self-centered and egotistical that at times it makes me sick. One point which hits

me the most is the unwillingness of Joe Civilian to give a pint of blood. Here . . . we all give a pint of blood every other month. We don't expect pay for it either. Yet the private citizen who sits at home and watches TV or goes to a basketball game or a movie, completely safe and not a bit afraid of an attack on his or her home can't give a pint of blood every two or three months for some poor guy whose blood is running out a hole in his side, trying to protect him.

"I suppose I seem bitter . . . but do you see what my viewpoint is? The trouble with most of the American people is that only a few of us younger men know what war really is, and what it can do to people, homes, churches and even religion. Japan is a good example. Before World War II, they were a fairly backward people, living in paper shacks, going to worship in large temples . . . worshipping heathen idols. Today, look at them, walk down the main street of any small city in the U. S., put up signs in Japanese, and you have a modern-day Tokyo or Yokahoma down-town district. They are beginning to build better houses, with wood, stone and brick, so that it will survive an earthquake. . . . They have built a few Christian churches and every day more and more Japanese go to these churches. They still have a belief in their heathen idols, but they are slowly but surely seeing the light and love of God. Now I ask you what did this? There is only one answer, War. Does this mean that people, in order to progress, must fight and kill each other? Look at the progress in Atomic power —(for destruction rather than for useful purposes). Very seriously, Mac, do you think that maybe all the teachings and the supreme sacrifice of God and Jesus Christ, were all in vain? I'd like to have an answer very soon, and a long talk when I get out . . . Okay? - - - - As ever, (name withheld)."

I

Because my answer to his letter and my plans for a sermon today were on the same theme, and because many people are seriously asking the same question about Christ having lived and died in vain, it seemed best to use my answer as the sermon this morning. So here it is:

"Received your very thoughtful letter. I am sure that all of us would think differently if we lived in your situation. You want a prompt answer.

"First, in regard to giving blood, although many are physically ineligible to do so, the rest of us should. You fellows need the blood available in storage, now, and not when it is too late. In Erie County, we can not give blood until January when a mobile unit goes about the county on its first of 14 visits during the next year. No unit is ready until next month, except in the larger cities.

"Secondly, you have raised the big question: Did Christ live and die in vain? That is a question which has always challenged theologians because it opens up the problem of evil. Why, if God made the world and sent his Son into it, does evil continue to be so powerful? You are asking, 'What good was the birth of this child in Bethlehem? Is there any message of good news from God anymore?' "

In trying to answer these questions, remember that I do not profess to have any special inside information regarding the will of God. What is here given is the sincere effort of one minister of Christ, which is substantiated by not only Bible teaching, but by the experience of many earnest Christians like yourself who have agonized themselves over the question. It is still your problem to think through yourself and test the Christian faith by the experience of trying it out: faith instead of anxiety, kindness instead of indifference, forgiveness instead of resentment and courage instead of despair.

II

Why did Christ come into the world? What good is it for us today? Let us

go back to the beginning. When God created the animals, he was not satisfied to let it go at that. He saw that the world would be dull if all creatures followed instinct. He thought, "I want creatures that I can communicate with, with minds and spirits, who can work with me to make a better world. But I want them to be free. It would be of no use just to have a race of puppets. I want people who will be able to discover the difference between good and evil, and capable of deciding in their own hearts to follow the good—made in my image—with freedom of choice—that is what I want." So God made us with minds and a conscience. He made us with a soul—that part of us which is divine and eternal—so we would hunger after more than bread and earthly pleasures—and in our hungering be receptive to higher and more noble ideas. And it is the evidence of our eternal destiny in God and God in us that the soul may thirst when the body is filled, and that the soul may be at peace, even wrapt in joy, when the body is wracked in pain. We are not dogs, but children of God! We were made in his image with the possibility of perfection—by faith.

But the first people on earth, represented by Adam and Eve, abused their freedom. They were told that the good was to obey God, but they wanted to taste of evil. God took the risk that this would happen in order that the human race would amount to more than animals, more than Charlie McCarthys and Mortimer Snerds, who can not think or act for themselves. By taking this risk, God limited his own power in the sense that a new creature was made who could if it desired oppose the will of God.

Now why this evil? It is basically what we call "pride." You and I think our conclusions are pretty sound, but we are apt to call the conclusions of someone else "prejudiced." We all do that. We even go farther. We make light of divine teaching such as the command to love. Our pride, due to the fact that it is sometimes impractical for the moment or inconvenient or embarrassing to love, to have good will and mercy, causes us to dismiss love as just a sentimental thing. So we never sacrifice our own conveniences to learn that love or active good will is the most practical force in the world, accomplishing what physical force can never accomplish. Another way of explaining this pride which is the basis for our sin is that we, each of us, want to play God. We each think that the world revolves around us, forgetting that it revolves around the Creator. Thus, acting upon a false picture or map of the universe, we disrupt the lives of others by our self-centeredness, as you have observed.

God saw that, even though divinely inspired prophets had revealed the Word of God to men, men needed more than that. "I must show them the power of love, that their conscience may be awakened and their hearts turned. I will send one who is perfect, not because he has to be, but because in his own human power he wants to be and so becomes. Through him I can save my children."

So Jesus lived and taught and proved his teaching in his deeds, died and by the grace of God rose again. His resurrection we may not understand. It was not in human form or flesh, perhaps, yet he was identified by his friends as alive. The meaning of the resurrection, among other things, is that *perfect love earns the final victory*—that evil destroys itself. Within a few years Jerusalem was destroyed, and the mighty are forgotten except as they are involved in the life of the humble Jesus. Another meaning of Christ's life and death and resurrection is that *this earthly life of the soul is only a small part of the whole life*—that our life is an adventure through eternity. If the soul is warped and withered, too attached to material things, certainly it is going to have a rough adjustment in the life after death. So here again we must declare, "No, the Lord's life was not in vain! It serves to awaken

the souls of many who would otherwise fail to respond to the love of God. It shows God's concern for individuals, for you and me. For Christ forgives and renews the sick, faithless soul."

Thirdly, God, by reaching us through Christ, is preparing us for greater usefulness here on this earth and hereafter. *For God has not given up this world!* There is still hope as long as there is sincere prayer and sincere effort to follow in the path of Christ. God is still very much alive—in every act of kindness or forgiveness of good will.

III

No, friend, the life of Christ was not in vain, for we are not helpless—for now it is made plain to us that the only hope for the world lies in a realm beyond the world. And we who suffer and struggle for Christ's cause find that though the outward proof of our success be small, the inward peace "Well done, thy good and faithful servant" is worth the struggle. It is better to have struggled for Christ and "lost" than never to have struggled at all. Spectators never accomplished anything. The salvation of the world lies in the salvation of persons as well as nations; yea, Jesus put all his attention on the individual and scorned the offer of a crown and an earthly kingdom.

So finally, *the Christian affirms that the hope for this world lies only in individuals who have staked their lives on what is beyond the world.* Only people who can think and live "without the world" yet in the world can be trusted with great worldly responsibility. Only such are capable of sacrificing for the good. All others cling to the notion that the world and the universe revolve around themselves, not God. They are still slaves of pride, of "playing God."

It is Christ who shatters this pride, who forgives our sin, who awakens our faith, who stimulates our powers for good. It is Christ who saves, but only those who make a surrender.

IV

You see, God still prefers a world in which men are not robots. Through the centuries he sees progress we cannot see. If you are tempted to give up hope for this world, take a walk on a starry night and behold the millions of other places God is working. Who knows but what greater victories have and will be obtained somewhere else? And if God can create such an infinitely large universe, if he can create human personalities, who are we to say that this world is beyond his power to save?

The failures in the world are the failures of men. Let us not mistake them for the failure of God. God succeeds whenever he gets a "toehold" on a human heart. There are so many victories. They do not reach the headlines often. People seem more anxious to read bad news than good. But stop sometime and think of all the events in your life which have been blessings, victories for God. And stop to consider, in spite of modern war, how much more kindness there is in the world because of Jesus of Nazareth.

We must remember that only when it is dark enough can we see the stars. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that through him the world might be saved."

I hope that some of these thoughts may help you to see the potentiality of perfection in other people, the possibility of more peace and good will. For only as you see these things, can you help them to be. It is in the realm of faith, in the things we can't see, but help to be because we believe; it is through the world of the spirit that the world of the flesh will be transformed. Christ's kingdom must begin in you and radiate outward, attracting others.

You have your discouragements. But

I have mine. A minister has great hopes for individuals in his care. Many times he is disappointed, often with himself. But he knows that he is not alone, that Christ is with us always, as he promised, even unto the end of the world. If he felt, if I felt that I were alone, if I felt that Christ had lived and died in vain, what would be the use in carrying on? It is only in faith that this world is but a proving ground, that there is more to life than the present, that causes us to press on. Christ is still very much alive. And there is our hope.

Don't stop asking questions! But have faith that there is an answer!

On Being Excited in the Pulpit

Dr. Joseph Novotny
Landeshaus, Germany

A LITTLE girl of about four was for the first time in church. It was in Europe in one of the old churches where they have the pulpit high, close to the ceiling. When her mother asked how she liked the church, the daughter answered, "There was a man whom they put into a barrel, only his head was sticking out and he was shouting at us all the time because we would not let him out."

Preachers could be classified in many groups. One classification could divide them into these two groups: the constantly excited preachers and the unbearably calm preachers. Both groups are extremes, both are wrong.

The constantly excited preacher is very unpleasant in the pew, his overemphasis misses the point, he is not successful because he is more noisy than logical, but his shouting cannot substitute persuasion.

The constantly calm preacher leaves the impression in the pew that everything in the world is all right; there is no reason to get excited over anything, there is every reason to fall asleep and go home fully self-satisfied.

To preach well is a great task. One should study the great preachers in the past. First of all, Jesus and the apostles.

After a thorough study one will discover that truly great preachers were great artists.

Why is it that we shall never forget such masterpieces of literature as the stories of the good Samaritan and the prodigal son? But also once we have read the story of Robinson Crusoe and Uncle Tom's Cabin, it rings in our souls forever. The same is true about all dramas of Shakespeare.

And if you turn to painting you will discover the same experience. We simply cannot forget the pictures of Rembrandt, Raphael, Titian, and Correggio—while we pass by the rest unmoved.

There is only one answer to it. All truly masterpieces of literature and painting follow one "conditio sine qua non." And this condition rests on the bottom of our souls.

* * *

Every masterpiece of literature must be created, according to certain rules. If these rules are obeyed, the literature will have the mark of eternity. What are these rules? They are the rules of every drama. The story must be calmly prepared in the beginning, developed, pointed to a crisis, must have above all a strong culminating point, and then quickly ended.

In the few great pictures in the world you will find the same laws. A picture which is, on the whole canvas, "quiet" or again "noisy," will not captivate the observer. If even it might be very re-

served, it must have one strong point of emphasis and only one. Only then it will live forever.

A sermon should be built on the same principles.

If the sermon is flat throughout the thirty minutes, nothing will happen under the pulpit. And if nothing happens, the preacher has no right of existence as a preacher. If again from the very beginning the pulpit rings with excitement, without interruption, indifference may be the result in the pew.

Every sermon should be a drama, a great picture.

It should start calmly, developing, pointing to a crisis but above all it must have a culminating point where the message of the sermon should be well styled and where genuine excitement even phonetically is in place. Then a quick end should follow.

This kind of excitement in the pulpit is not only justified but necessary if success should follow.

It is only natural that after one of the greatest sermons was preached — by Peter on the day of Pentecost—people rushed to him with the question: "What should we do?"

It is said that a great painter finished his picture and invited his friend for observation and criticism. The friend was kind but also honest. He expressed his disappointment. He said the painter missed one great point of emphasis in the picture. The master accepted the criticism in good spirit. He dipped his brush in red paint and touched the picture in one point. The picture was lighted by the master touch and became eternal.

After we have prepared our sermon we might just as well ask the Master for his criticism. A touch from his open palm pierced with nails might make our sermon living and a real blessing.

My Fifty Years in the Ministry

The Rev. Leon H. Austin

Pastor Emeritus of the Second Church at Coventry, Connecticut celebrated fifty years in the ministry with this very lovely "valedictory"

(John 21:22. Follow thou Me.)

II

As a general rule it is not advisable for a minister to take the pastorate of the church where he was born and grew up; neither should he remain in a parish he has served and concluded his work there. The Great Master was right when He said, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." There are exceptions to every rule; nevertheless, I have at times been conscious of certain limitations in breaking that rule and, no doubt, may have been a hindrance to others working here. The church made me Pastor Emeritus. I bear glad testimony to the Christian love and kindness of this people to us always, and never forgetting us during the last ten years, to this very hour. These last ten years brought us not only the rich blessings of our own home and the never-failing love of this people, but the continued confidence of the churches, revealed in constant invitations to serve them in the pulpit or in other forms of ministerial service. For these spiritual riches we have been and are devoutly thankful.

* * *

When I was ordained—liberal, conservative, fundamentalist, modernist—were still words fraught with deepest meaning and destiny for the young theologue knocking at the door of the ministry. Evolution and higher criticism

were horrible thoughts and the admission of belief in these was sure to divide an Ecclesiastical Council with fiery debate, and often with the refusal to ordain the candidate for pastoral service. The infallibility of the Scriptures, the miracles, the Virgin birth, eschatology, the future state when this mortal has put on immortality, must be knowingly and properly treated by those worthy of the ministry. Missions, home and foreign, pastoral work, the life and conduct of the minister, these and other questions were never omitted from the ordeal. For the most part older men, of the Old School and stalwarts in the ministry, put the young hopeful through his paces and passed the verdict upon him. He was made the gauge by which seminaries, colleges, educational institutions, where he had studied, were measured, and confidence in or opposition to them accordingly followed. Then, ordination was not to be taken lightly, unadvisedly, or with the spirit of levity. It was in the extreme an experience never to be forgotten.

Ordination has always been necessary for service in the Christian ministry but the installing of a minister over a particular church, a universal custom years ago, is today probably more honored in the breach than the observance. In Congregationalism the authority of the local church over its own affairs has always been acknowledged, but other one-time functions have more and more been lodged in Associations, county, state, and national, and so far forth the powers of the local church have been curtailed. This tendency continues. Sectarianism, once so strong and harmful, has given way to a large measure of hearty Christian cooperation for the enriching and strengthening of religious work and service. A definite decrease in candidates for the Christian ministry has taken place. For example, in my class in Amherst College, founded expressly to help indigent young men into the ministry, one fourth were preparing for that calling. For years now often not even one out of a class may be doing so. The same is true in other colleges once reservoirs of life for the home churches and mission fields. We are not turning out enough ministers to man our churches, and mission fields call in vain for workers.

* * *

Religious standards have been lowered or, all too often, ignored altogether. The practice of religion has declined. The Sabbath has been given over to all kinds of work and pleasure. Family worship, as such, in the home and church is at a low ebb. Lower moral standards obtain. The material is exalted above the spiritual. Honor and integrity are slipping. We are placing our lives and our destiny in man and his inventions and less in God and heavenly grace and power. We are living and striving and giving life for things of lesser value, when we might have the best and should try for it. Yes, I know thousands, even millions, are living sober, righteous and godly lives, but are having no easy time of it in the face of godless nations, snuffing out the lives of believers, rearing the young in the belief there is no god but Caesar, ever pointing to the swastika, the hammer and sickle, not the cross. The recent revelations of moral decay and spiritual degeneracy in our own land, with the half untold, should call in thunder tones to this nation to purge itself of all insidious, devisive, destroying forces in our midst, lest the sure foundations upon which we once builded crumble into dust.

"Old forms may lose their power,
old shibboleths cry in vain,
but the old virtues of Truth,
Honor, Integrity, Faith, Justice,
Love of God and man, never change."

* * *

I have never been an extremist. I have never carried a theological chip on my shoulder. I have never spent any time or preached sermons crying down

other denominations than my own, or made light of another's belief or form of worship. My own sermons have been for the most part inspirational and evangelistic. I have always had strong convictions and have them now, but have always thought to reveal them in the life I have tried to live and not to arbitrarily impose them upon others. Doubtless the passing years have made me more charitable towards others and their beliefs, and at the same time, made my own life a bit sweeter, more winsome, more potent in wooing to the Christ. I have always cooperated with others who would have me for a helper, no matter of what race, or color, or condition in life. The Heavenly Jerusalem is four square, "On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates." And all who follow the Christ will enter there. It is character that counts and not being a member of a certain class or race.

I have always believed that truth is mighty and must ultimately prevail; that though today right may be upon the scaffold and wrong upon the throne, yet

"That scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dark unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above his own?";

that althongh moral and spiritual darkness envelope the world a fairer day shall dawn—

"For I doubt not though the ages one
increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of man are widen'd
with the process of the suns."

I believe, that man was made by God, to serve with God, and to be with God, and therefore, "Life is ever lord of death; and Love can never lose its own."

The passion of my soul is to be at one with God in Christ; making for the Life Indeed; in abundant measure here, in divine and heavenly fulness when I see, not as now through a glass darkly, but face to face; when I know, not as now in part, but even as I shall be known.

* * *

Fifty Years in the Gospel Ministry! Would I do it again?

Yes, a thousand times, yes—For I could not, would not, say, "No" to the Christ and His call, "Follow thou Me."

Yes, a thousand times, yes—For what it has brought to me in the fellowship of the Gospel.

Yes, a thousand times, yes—For what it has enabled me to do with my life and powers for individual souls, needing the sustaining power and grace of our Heavenly Father and the presence and peace of the Christ who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Yes, a thousand times, yes—For having a share, through Christ and the Church in a redeemed world when—

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

When Dr. George A. Gordon wrote his autobiography, "My Education and Religion," he dedicated it to his wife in these words—

"I dedicate this book to my wife—
Susan Manning Gordon
My incomparable Companion and fellow servant
In the Old South Church, Boston."

I owe more than I can say to Dr. Gordon for the inspiration he gave me by his preaching, his sermons and other addresses, masterly efforts of a great soul and a great life. I am sure he would not chide me for taking his thought and applying it to Bessie Carter Austin and saying of her, "My incomparable Comrade and fellow servant in our common service in the Christian Ministry for the 47½ years of our married life." She

deserves every bit as much credit as myself for whatever success we achieved through those years.

We were married in the Quincy Point Church, September 5, 1902. In one spirit with one purpose, we lived and served. Hand in hand, heart to heart, life joined to life, we carried on. She never faltered whatever the challenge; in the depths or on the heights, never thought of turning back. When nearing her eightieth milestone, the physical failed, but her spirit fared on, radiant, fearless, triumphant. I could desire, and I do desire, no greater faith when I also come to the end of life's questing here and go to make final accounting for the stewardship entrusted to me by the Great Master; when He called that night, more than three score years ago, in words ringing in my ears ever since, and challenging my soul these fifty years in the ministry, even these words, "Follow thou Me."

Prayer.

Blessed Lord and Master, for thy call to follow thee—for the fields of service to which thy Holy Spirit led me—for thy true and loyal servants with whom I have labored these fifty years—I thank thee.

For the lives enriched and blessed—for the souls saved through thy redeeming love and grace—for the lives dedicated to sacrificial service in behalf of thy church and kingdom under my ministry and the one who shared the same with me—I thank thee.

For thy presence and sustaining grace—for the deathless hope that we shall share with thee the fulness of the heavenly life, in complete oneness with our Heavenly Father—I praise thee, O Lord.

Blessed Jesus, in this holy hour, in this last moment, as we wait here with bowed heads, open minds, and yielding hearts, may we, each one, hear thy loving voice saying, "Follow thou Me."

Yes,

"In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.

Drop thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace." Amen.

An Installation Paper,

Presented Before the Association Council Convened at South Congregational Church, St. Johnsbury, Vermont on Wednesday, May 16th, 1951 in the Sanctuary

The Rev. Kenneth O. Eaton
St. Johnsbury, Vermont

Ecclesiastes 12:10 "The preacher sought to find (out) acceptable words."

II Timothy 1:11, 12 RSV (parts) "For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher.... I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed...."

II Corinthians 4:13 (part) "We too believe, and so we speak."

("What follows is a considerable revision of a most admirable installation paper which was in its entirety too long for this present issue of the Quarterly. The revising of it has been a staff enterprise. We have left out many things which Mr. Eaton said, but we have taken great care not to leave out anything essential or to make him say what he did not say. The essence of his notable paper is here." The Editorial Staff)

SOMEBODY has said that the supreme moment in a man's life comes when he can stand up and say, concerning the deepest things in life, "I believe!" Congregational Christians have never made much of official creeds, yet it is a great thing to have the privilege of a sympathetic and interested hearing as one stands up to testify to things most surely believed, and to endeavor to "speak a good word for Jesus Christ" —not because He needs our approval, but because we need so desperately to come to terms with Him, both for what He said and for what He is: the only true and sufficient Saviour of the world.

It will never do for us as individuals or as members of the Church to disparage theology and doctrine and the importance of belief in the development of our faith and the living of our Christian witness. Jesus, Himself, came preaching and teaching a well articulated Gospel of the Kingdom of God. It was one of the merits of the early Church that its members continued in the apostle's teaching as well as in the breaking of bread and prayer. One of the weaknesses of Christianity today is a fundamental lack of establishment in the historic Christian faith.

With these preliminary remarks let me attempt to set forth a few of my own convictions which are not really mine in any original meaning of the word, but mine by personal appropriation, from the rich and inexhaustible treasury of the Christain faith itself. It has been eleven years now since I've attempted anything of this kind at any one time or place. If you must inquire into how my mind has changed let me say that it has been in a general way from "liberalism" in theology and more and more in the direction of what a recent author has called "dynamic orthodoxy." No longer is the Bible for some of us a puzzle to be solved, but a Kingdom to be explored. No longer is the main concern of preachers to reconcile science with religion and religion with science but rather to see how in obedience to God we can be saved from the misuse to which we have put our science. No longer does the inevitability of man's upward climb toward the light make sense to our minds. The possibility of regression haunts our thoughts and we see afresh our desperate predicament, our need of a downstretched hand from beyond ourselves.

In saying this the writer does not wish to overlook his indebtedness to the whole liberal tradition, its intellectual concern,

its stress upon the place of reason in religion, its contribution to biblical scholarship, its lessons of tolerance, its emphasis on the dignity of human life and the nearness and imminence of God. I am most deeply grateful that I was educated in the mental atmosphere of liberalism even though many liberal conclusions seem to me now inadequate. Truth seems the more precious for having had to search for it through long and arduous pilgrimages.

This bring us to one further prefacing remark. **** We can know true things about God only by ourselves knowing God. The immediacies of personal religion provide the data for intellectual formulations of belief.

* * *

In proceeding to systematize a few of my Christian convictions (and I shall confine myself to those which are a working part of my preaching) I am going to use for outline the so-called Kansas City Declaration of Faith. **** Because after more than five years of its rather consistent use in morning services of worship, it glows with a certain luminous meaning and seems to cover the main aspects of Christian thinking with astonishing clarity and completeness.

"I believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness and love." **** I believe not only that God is infinite in his wisdom, goodness and love, but that He is *infinite*. He is the Holy One high and lifted up Whom we should approach with fear and trembling, yet with confident assurance of His love and mercy. I am sure that most of us do not give sufficient thought to the "otherness" of God; His majesty His devastating purity; His soul shattering judgments; all the more shattering because they are the judgments of Holy Love; before this God we do well to cry out with Isaiah "Woe is me" **** "I am a man of unclean lips."

But God is also personal, intimate, available and near. **** I believe God is a self-revealing, self-disclosing God. How could finite, sinful man discover the infinite and utterly Holy God unless God Himself in love and mercy and compassion chose to disclose Himself. Our search ****** for Him is the response to His antecedent search for us. ****** My need for God is the strongest kind of immediate evidence I know for the fact of His reality. It is like echo to voice, eyes to light, hunger to food. I do not think that God is provable in any strict sense of the word, but He is knowable. There are experiences that come to us which are self-authenticating. ****** All He asks of us is a certain will to believe, a certain fundamental humility and receptivity of heart and soul and He will prove Himself. ******* What is this pull we feel from beyond ourselves, this affinity of the soul for God, unless God is in fact there and calling? The best single statement that I have ever seen concerning it is this by W. McNeil Dixson "The soul does not provide itself with a passport for an imaginary country and cannot vibrate to a note unsounded in the universe."

* * *

God reveals Himself in other ways, in addition to these more mystical leanings: in the world of nature, for instance, ***** I like the way Pascal summarizes it. "Nature has some perfection to show us that she is the image of God and some defects to show us that she is only His image;" Pensees, 579. Most of us would feel that the perfections outnumber the defects and as we have felt the healing, restoring touch of God through our exposures to the loveliness and orderliness of God's world and as we have contemplated the real meaning of sun and stars, we have felt

"In reason's ear, they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
Forever singing, as they shine:
The hand that made us is divine."

* * *

Second: But clearest and purest and strongest of all, we behold the Father in

the life and person of Jesus Christ. "I believe in Jesus Christ, His Son, Our Lord and Saviour, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and liveth forever more." ***** The incarnation is the central doctrine of the Christian faith without which there simply is no true Christianity. Baron Von Hugel ***** points this when he says "God has in various degrees, in various ways been coming into the world ever since He made it." It is a certain kind, the supreme kind of incarnation, that we find and adore in the incarnation of Christ. It gives a standard to all the lesser preveniences. ******* Because Plato and Socrates are not Christ, they are not sheer nothings; still less are Amos, Isaiah or Akiba."

Nevertheless we do well to emphasize the uniqueness of the Incarnation of Christ, "the manhood of God." Only by virtue of His divinity and unique Sonship can Jesus be called our Lord and Saviour. He is our Master, not merely in the sense of being the Supreme Teacher, ******* but in the sense of "Dominus," the Lord, the One whom we obey and in Whose service, we find the freedom of a Christian man. ****** If we are not Mastered by Christ, we shall be mastered by that which is no rightful master at all, *******.

I believe not only in Christ as Lord, but also in Christ as Saviour. A belief in the Saviourhood of God implies a sobering belief in the sinfulness of man *******. It is not simply that men commit sin but that man is a sinner. There is a radical core of evil deep in his very nature, *****. Sin is not merely a transgression of an ethical code ******. Sin is an offense against Love and only Divine Love such as was revealed on the Cross of Calvary is adequate to deal with it (and here Mr. Eaton quotes at some length from significant passages in Paul's Letter to the Romans.) ******* Only Christ the Saviour can save man from himself and from the contradiction of his own sinful nature. He requires a radical remedy, a great redemption made possible to him by God in Christ. ****** Not that we are rid of sin. The battle between the angel and the devil goes on. But through His power we can be rid of our slavery to sin and this is the victory. To summarize: man is a sinner, man needs a saviour, man is salvable *******. Christianity at heart is a personal relationship to the personal saviour.

Third: "I believe in the Holy Spirit who taketh of the things of Christ and revealeth them to us, renewing, comforting and inspiring the souls of men." I believe God is not simply mediating, He is also immediate.******The Holy Spirit is the same God who made the world, spoke to the Prophets, came in His Son, and breathes His life into the human soul in the intimacies of a divine fellowship.

A firm belief in the Holy Spirit will keep alive the vitality of our Christian faith and experience more than any other single doctrine. To believe in the Holy Spirit is to believe that God is not a God of the dead, but of the living; not of the past alone, but of the throbbing present. **** Christianity, this personal relationship with the personal God, is not merely a memory kept alive by our religious anniversaries; it is a repetition. The Birth of Christ is wasted unless we die to selfishness; the Resurrection wasted unless we are born again and raised with Christ to newness of eternal life.

Fourth: "We are united in striving to know the Will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us." This way of interpreting the Bible is a logical outgrowth of a lively faith in a living God. God speaks to me through these inspired pages. ***** Here is a lamp for my pilgrimage. **** Here is a personally signed invitation to the King's banquet. **** A letter from God which seems indicated for me personally. It is a letter of judgment, of reproof, of guidance and of love: And hints of a splen-

dor yet unguessed in a place prepared. ******

The Bible to me is more and more not just a collection of beautiful observations about life, but a collection of messages from God. ***** It hangs together, it builds to a climax, it unfolds life, like some enormous epic. ***** I appreciate now its devotional as over-against a merely homoletical use, and yet it is for me increasingly the basis and foundation for the sermons I try to preach. My topics may come from a variety of sources, often from the hymnbook, but the text are invariably from the Bible, eight times in ten from the New Testament, and almost invariably there is a text. The Bible must be the basis for any pulpit work that is to meet the tremendous needs of people at any real depth. There is more wisdom in the Bible about how to face the practical problems of life, than in sixty-six volumes on a library shelf under the heading Psychology. Authors who take their stand on biblical truth and insight seem to me better equipped to appraise the present situation and the way out of our man-made confusion than the wisest, most brilliant, of our secular scholars.

* * *

Fifth: "We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind, exalting the worship of the one true God and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace and the realization of human brotherhood." I believe in the world-wide, society-wide outreach of the Church of Christ, not as a mere postscript to the Gospel but as one of its main assignments. To pray the Lord's Prayer ****, is to commit one's self, rather to commit ourselves to the deepest care and concern for the spiritual, the social and the economic welfare of our neighbors whether they live next door or on the other side of the Gospel. The "Social Gospel" may be a misnomer but the passion and compassion which the nameplate was meant to cover are valid and necessary. ***** Let us not suppose that we have outgrown the necessity for the social implications of the mission methods of Jesus. Whenever the Church neglects its divine commission to enlighten the ignorant, feed the hungry, condemn injustice and challenge the pretentions of Statism, it promptly loses both its own soul and eventually the respect of the world. ******

As John Wesley put it "Christianity is essentially a social religion. To turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it. The Church is, I believe, the divinely ordained means for the transformation of society as well as of individuals. We must understand that the Church is more than just a name. It is also an end, a reality in its own right and at this point the Kansas City Declaration leaves much to be desired. It defines the task of the Church. It says nothing to define the Church. Here one craves a sentence in the Nicene Creed "I believe in the one holy, catholic and apostolic church."

I believe that the Church is best defined in St. Paul's great metaphor, which is more than a metaphor, as the "Body of Christ." It is not merely an organization, it is an organism. The marks of the true Church are possession of the belief in the Resurrection of Christ and possession of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. **** The Church is the fellowship of salvation. It is the community of those who share a faith in Christ as Lord and a common redemption through Him.

Sixth: "Depending as did our fathers upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world in to the Kingdom of God and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting."

I believe in prayer. I believe in prayer as the exposure of the soul to God. I be-

lieve in prayer as a stairway by which I ascend to God and God descends to me. ***** Out of prayer and the changes wrought by prayer in individual and disciplined groups and revitalized churches, comes the faith in a triumph of righteousness. I believe in the life everlasting. ****** I believe that death is God's secret panel in what looks like an impenetrable wall leading into another room and His universe and that nothing can separate us from His love and the love of Christ. I believe that the preacher should be the pastor and that much as we need and love ideas, we must love people even more. If I may be permitted I should like to close this presentation with a poem prayer which I wrote six years ago upon assuming the charge of a new church. It still represents my truest and deepest aspirations.

A Pastor's Prayer

(Jesus said, I am the Door of the sheep)

Dear Lord, of every gathered flock the Shepherd true,

Who callest me to walk in pastures strange and new,

These are the gifts supreme I ask Thee in Thy grace;

No stone-free path, nor love of power, nor pride of place,

No plaudits of the crowd to please an hireling heart;

But numbered with Thy faithful, share a humble part, —

Some corner, be it front or back, of Thy great fold

Wherein to labor and to lead both young and old;

And loving these for Thee, shall help them love Thee more,

Of every heart the Home, of every sheep the Door.

And this I pray, who would Thy faithful servant be;

While leading others, ever close may follow Thee.

Television And Religion

Yale University News Bureau

New Haven, Connecticut, March 27, 1952

PROBABLY the first Protestant Communion Service ever to be held in a television studio will be broadcast to Southern New England on Thursday afternoon, April 10.

The program will climax a weekly Lenten series, "Protestants Look at Lent," which started March 13 on New Haven Station WNHC-TV.

The series is an initial step toward regular television programming and direction, which probably will start next fall, by students and faculty members of the Yale Divinity School.

The present programs are presented under the auspices of the New Haven Council of Churches and the Connecticut Council of Churches.

Miss Helen Kenyon, noted churchwoman and past moderator of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches, is acting as master of ceremonies. Well known church leaders, both from Connecticut and national religious bodies, are participating.

The series is unusual in several respects. For example, it is the first religious series to be presented on Station WNHC, which estimates its television audience to number approximately 500,-

000 sets through Connecticut, central Massachusetts and southern Vermont.

Two divinity students — Robert W. Nelson, Jr., Class of 1952, of Hartford, Conn., and William T. Payne, 1953, of Philadelphia, Pa. — are directing the series which is being telecast every Thursday afternoon from 2:45 to 3:00 p.m.

The students are members of classes directed at the Divinity School by the Rev. Everett C. Parker, Lecturer in Religious Radio.

The climaxing Communion program will be conducted by the Rev. Bernard Drew, pastor of the Asylum Hill Church of Hartford. Introductory remarks will be given by Miss Kenyon.

The series began with a program featuring the Rev. C. Lawson Willard, pastor of New Haven's Trinity Church on the Green, and Mrs. William O. Gardiner, of Stratford, Conn., president of the Connecticut Council of Church Women.

The March 20 program presented the Rev. Robbins W. Barstow, of New York, official of Church World Service. Master of ceremonies in the absence of Miss Kenyon was the Rev. Edward Tuller, of Hartford, Executive Secretary of the state church council.

This week's program (Thurs., March 27) will be entitled "Worship Through Rhythmic Movement" and will feature a choir of girls, directed by Mrs. Nan Kaiper, from the Church of the Redeemer, New Haven.

The Rev. S. Franklin Mack, of New York, Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions and Director of the overseas audio-visual program of the Foreign Missions Division, National Council of Churches, will appear on the fourth program on April 3. This program will be entitled "Brotherhood."

Miss Kenyon, a native of Brooklyn, N. Y., was for many years chairman of the Board of Trustees of Vassar College. She has devoted her life to work in the fields of education and religion.

She is no stranger to radio and television work in matters religious, having started one of the first religious TV programs two years ago for the Dumont network.

The Lenten series broadens still further the scope of work at the Yale Divinity School in both production and research in the radio-television-film field. Students have been producing a weekly 15-minute radio program, "Religion at the News Desk," for many months. The program is serviced to a growing list of stations across the country.

Mr. Parker, who says that the Yale Divinity School is one of the few seminaries engaging in communications research work, is currently heading a large research project for the National Council of Churches.

One segment of the overall project concerns a Constituency Survey which is being taken in the New Haven area and which proposes to "secure an adequate picture of the constituency of Protestantism in metropolitan New Haven and of the institutions that serve this constituency."

God's Righteousness

We come to God
With little cups;
And pray His Grace
To fill them up
With righteousness.
God looks
Upon our human scene
And yearns to find
An open life—
In man, or church, or nation—
To let His righteous power
Run full and free:
A stream, a torrent,
And a waterfall;
The ceaseless arching
Of His waves
To cleanse the lives of all!

FSB

The Evil of the Eleven O'clock Service

Mr. D. R. Evans

East Orange, New Jersey

(Excerpts from a talk by a Lay-Moderator of one of our Conferences, given at the Annual Meeting of the Conference)

IF the ministerial members of this gathering will pardon a layman for quoting scripture to them, I would like to give you three texts, for I feel the need of support from all three. First, "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God"; second, "But Ye Shall Receive Power"; third, "By Their Fruits, Ye Shall Know Them."

I

In discussing my theme I shall attempt to show wherein the eleven o'clock service has been unfruitful, and I will try to offer a few suggestions to help solve the problem of making this part of our ministry more vital. The good, and there is much good in most of our morning services, will take care of itself without eulogy or apology. The over-emphasis, —the near monopoly of our church life, and its general failure in these days to produce adequate results,—these need examination and correction.

I am not so naive as to expect that what I have to say in these few minutes will turn the tide, but I do hope that you will not dismiss it as merely an expression of "neoorthodoxy"; and I do expect to so needle your consciences that if ever you were complacent, you will cease to be so.

A little background information may help you to better appraise myself and my message. My Welsh origin tends to explain my interest in the church, and to account somewhat for my non-conformist attitude. That is characteristic of the Welsh, and I think there is need for an occasional "voice crying in the wilderness."

The problem of the eleven o'clock service, its pros and cons, has been on my heart and mind for the past three years, ever since a former pastor asked the members of his congregation to write down and send him their ideas about what they liked and disliked in the morning service, along with suggestions for improving it. That really started me to thinking seriously about the problem, and I have come to the conclusion that basically it is a lay problem. Until the lay men and women of our churches realize the imperative need for a more vital and significant religious experience, the clergy will also be a "voice crying in the wilderness."

We need to take a good look at some of the basic concepts of our religion. We need to understand and really feel that Christianity is primarily and essentially a Way of Life for the heart as well as the head. A Way of Life that by the help of Almighty God; the love, example and teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the power of the Holy Spirit; we can in some measure achieve.

Let us note Christ's two commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul and mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Many of our hymns also help to illumine this way of life for us, and I would like to suggest the titles of four by way of illustration:

"Sweet Hour of Prayer"
"O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go"
"O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee"
"Where Cross The Crowded Ways of Life"

I am sure that the words of these hymns are familiar to all of you and that in them is to be found much of the

gospel's dynamic power and expression. It is interesting to note that the last two hymns were penned by Congregational ministers.

I would also mention a duty and responsibility which we have as followers in the Christian Way. It was once called "the salvation of souls" but I shouldn't use that phrase now, for to many it has come to mean only "pie in the sky." Peace also used to be an honored word, but today it has a red tinge and one needs to be careful about using it. Losing these good words is like losing old friends. Let us say then that as church leaders we have a responsibility for bringing individuals into a meaningful relationship with God. From the reports that over the years have come from our young people's conferences, some of you are doing that very important task. There are also other reports of good works in our Conference which you will hear this afternoon and tomorrow, in which we can take pride and for which we can give thanks.

And now that we have this background filled in even though somewhat sketchily, let us see what are some of the obstacles or hindrances which the eleven o'clock service, as generally observed and practiced, presents to our achievement of this way of life.

II

Not the most important but the most evident obstacle to the achievement of the best results in an eleven o'clock Sunday morning service is the church building itself—a relatively large and costly structure designed primarily for use for only one hour a week. Its high initial cost and yearly maintenance tends to circumscribe and focus our vision too exclusively on the church as a local institution, and thus to reduce the financial support which we make available for the wider mission and interest of the church. Fortunate is the pastor who in urging upon his congregation an increase for World Missions has not had some layman reply, "We must take care of our local budget first"; or else someone raises the question, "Can we afford it?"

This building, which furnishes the setting for the eleven o'clock service,—a beautiful sanctuary for well-dressed people like ourselves, is also typical, too typical of the total religious life and aspirations of many of us—a one-hour-a-week, mountain-top experience, the Alpha and Omega of our religious commitment. In contrast to this stands the Salvation Army whose open-air meetings on street corners represent the other extreme. I hope for us there may be a happy medium; a sanctuary open for worship at all hours of the week and from which we shall also go forth to carry His name and message into the crowded ways of life.

One of the greatest weaknesses with the eleven o'clock service is that which pervades so much of our American way of life today. The rank and file are only spectators. Our active participation is so limited, so passive. We go to baseball or football games, sit on a bench and watch a few professional athletes perform. We go to the movies or watch our television sets and are entertained without having a part to play ourselves. We have become a nation that has largely lost the art of doing for ourselves, and a people without active participation in anything beyond our jobs. The morning service is in the hands of the preacher. We pay him, the organist, and sometimes even the choir to take all the responsibility and to do all the work. The average man feels little more responsibility for the arrangement, preparation and functioning of the morning service than he does for the conduct of his government in Washington. If a congregation had to order and conduct its own morning service of worship sometimes, it would be a healthy and salutary experience.

The relatively high cost of the eleven o'clock service, averaging in some cases 70% of the total church budget, gives

it an undue emphasis of importance. Both the minister and the people are too prone to make the service their main expression of their religious duty and service to God. The layman attending this service feels he has fulfilled his duty to his God and to his church until the following Sunday. The minister is judged by his ability as a speaker, and how well he fills the church on Sunday morning. (We should all remember that what we do speaks more loudly than what we say.) But even if the minister does preach a soul-thrilling and challenging sermon, and we are stirred and enthused, where (too often) is the leadership that will direct our enthusiasm into productive channels in the following days? We tell the preacher it was a great sermon and then go our ways. Some of us go sadly for we know too well that nothing will come of it. We need great souls in our pews as well as in our pulpits; great souls who will lead us down from the mountain top and out into the promised land where the fields are ripe unto the harvest.

Aside from our church schools, young people's and women's societies, which are all vitally important and rate more attention than generally they receive, and outside of the eleven o'clock service, what is left of our churches? Little, too little! There may be a few Lenten services, a pastor's confirmation class, an every-member canvass,—excellent fragments but generally only the concern of a faithful few. Sometimes I think that more lasting good is accomplished in the church school than in the morning service.

Have we sought first the kingdom of God, or have we sought first the eleven o'clock service? Have we received and do we have power to bring men and women to love their God and into the fellowship of a vital and meaningful church?

III

And now for the third part of my text; What about the fruits of this over emphasis on the eleven o'clock service? Some of you may have seen the figures in a recent issue of the new Advance. (If any of you haven't yet subscribed, don't put it off any longer. It is a wonderful paper and full of ideas.) These figures show that we Congregational Christians are at the bottom of the list in our membership increase from 1926 to 1948, the increase being only 19%. The denominations most like us are also low on the list; Northern Baptists 23%, Northern Presbyterians 27% and the Unitarians 24%. The Roman Catholics gained 48%. They are coming up. The Mormon church gained 80%. I don't care for their theology, but I admire their devotion and zeal and many excellent qualities. The Seventh Day Adventists gained 107% and the Church of God in Christ, 1,025%. These Pentecostal, store-front churches are coming up the fastest of all. The pity of it is that some day they too will probably become "respectable" and grow soft and lose their enthusiasm.

Since 1895 our Congregational Christian Churches have doubled their membership, but a large share of our growth has been at the expense of other denominations. The E & R people would have helped us to be more evangelistic in our outreach and for this quality, I would have welcomed a merger with them. We also draw on other denominations for our ministerial leaders. I could name quite a number, including our own beloved Superintendent, who have come to us from other groups, but not so many can I name who were raised and trained in the Congregational Christian fold.

What can we do to put first things first? I have one rather facetious suggestion—that we limit or restrict attendance at the eleven o'clock service to the saints; and we have quite a few of them in our churches. I would classify as saints those who are doing a reasonable tour of Christian service. By reasonable,

I mean only reasonable and not perfection itself. Then I would institute another service where the rank and file would be worked with and trained so that they might qualify as saints and thus become eligible to join in the morning service.

But more seriously: many of you probably read the article in Time Magazine concerning Bishop Sherrill, the first President of the National Council of Churches. This article stated that a material-minded laity was largely responsible for many of our Protestant ills in this country. Thus it is, brethren and sisters of the laity, that you and I are largely responsible for this eleven o'clock service which prospered and reached its flowering in good old New England many years ago. If the eleven o'clock service is to flower and bring forth fruit again, you and I will need to seek greater spiritual resources than we have ever known before, and we will need to be willing to work as we have not worked before.

There should be more emphasis on personal evangelism and on counseling, on the establishment of groups in our churches who will be concerned with good race relations, sound labor-management policies, the promotion of international understanding and good will, and joint groups with other churches to study and act on community problems. Pervading all of this activity will need to be a deep spirit of prayer and personal commitment.

You say, "Truly a fine goal, but where shall we start?" I suggest a greater emphasis and participation in heart to heart talks, retreats, summer conferences, institutes and seminars, where the mind and heart can not only be touched but can be guided into a richer and more fruitful way of life. Not all of us can be great souls like Phillips Brooks or Bishop Sherrill, but each of us can be a humble follower of our Master; and in humble but devoted ways give ourselves to the end that His kingdom may come and His will be done on earth as in heaven.

Concerning Time In Its Flight

The Editor

OFTEN, though not always, the editor's contributions to this Quarterly have been written after the other material was in type, and so to speak, tailored to fit the space. All this to get the proper multiples of eight in page lengths as measured meticulously by Mrs. Baker and from whose Rhadamanthine edicts, there is no appeal. "For this issue," she said, "you have only two pages. In this case your procrastination has been the thief of space," or words to that effect. "Why not," said Dr. Bushmeyer, "tell your readers why. And use the first personal pronoun."

* * *

Well, then, my daughter and I have done what we have been planning, and often postponed, since last June. We have flown to Ohio and I, at least, turned time backwards in our flight. Flying itself, is a strange commerce with sky-space and time and cloudland and haunting vistas of habitations far below, now seen, now lost, and overarching emptiness. I do not wonder that the dream of it is so unbelievably old; as though we had a birthright in the Empyrian. Even when one is seemingly lost in the clouds the movements of their masses, wind-shifted, are fascinating in their revelation of opening and closing depths. I remember a flight from Detroit through a summer sky of cumulous clouds, when the plane became a ship on the bluest of

seas and the clouds were like floating icebergs with which a collision brought no shock, only shadows penetrated and left behind; as though we had found the Psalmist's wings of the morning.

There are analogies, not to be pressed too much, between flight and preaching. Introductions are the runways to get sermons off the ground. The great preachers of earlier generations needed and took long approaches to their homiletic flights. Our congregations want a preacher to get off and up quickly, streamline his flight, not get lost in the clouds and make a good smooth three-point landing. They would welcome now and then a spacious vista, some sense of seeing life from above and the call of far horizons. But there are limits to analogies, though I do think a good sermon should have both earth and sky in it and a preacher should be a good pilot through both sunlight and shadow in the flights of time.

Our flight was, in a haunting way, toward a renewal of old friendships, long associations and treasured memories. The friends with whom we stayed a little, gracious in their hospitality, I had known for years we had ceased to count. They remembered what I remembered, which is I suppose the secret of treasured friendships, as when we can say, one to another, "Don't you remember?" The village Presbyterian church where we went to evening services was the same church, though not in the same building, in which I preached my first sermon and there were still a few who remembered me then, but not the sermon. I remember it. It was about faith; and the manuscript, for I wrote it, finally became yellow and brittle.

* * *

As we drove through the most fertile countryside in Ohio there were evidences everywhere that the governmental efforts farmers had been receiving have not been wasted. There is a more intelligent care for soil conservation and defense against erosion. The farm buildings are well painted, the fences are good, crop yield has increased, hybrid corn has multiplied one seed grain more than eight hundred times (we counted), soy beans have partially replaced corn. If only war would let us alone, there would be bread enough and to spare, and what we have wasted in the devastation of war would harness for human well being our lawless western rivers.

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My own earliest connected memories begin with an ancestral farmhouse, burned a few years ago, on a hill slope high enough to command some hundreds of fertile acres, rimmed by low hills in the Little Miami Valley. The whole region is mellow with associations of my boyhood years. I have returned to it often and always have felt the spell of its quiet beauty. The little village a mile away, where we went to the postoffice and church and I to school, and my mother before me, is outwardly strangely unchanged. There, at least, time seems to have stood still. There is still the little Methodist church in which some of us went to the mourners bench along with the village derelict. I do not know quite why we went. I did not want my own children to do it. There is, we think, a better way. But I have always been glad I did. As I saw the church again I wondered how so small a building could contain so long an aisle down which I summoned resolution enough to go, while quavering voices sang "Just as I am without one plea."

All my mother's folk and father and mother have long been at rest in the village cemetery on the hill above the village—a lovely and gracious God's acre and, on an April afternoon, washed with the peace of God. So many of the names on the neighboring tombstones were familiar; they recorded wise and good and laborious generations.

My wife's girlhood home was not too far away and on a low stone of Rose

Granite there are two names and three dates, awaiting the fourth.

There are only a few of us, I do not know how many, who are left of the Class of 1888, Ohio State University. We were guests for a night of one of them, Dr. Wilbur H. Siebert, who had just crowned a life-long study "OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY" with his "MYSTERY OF THE UNDERGROUND IN OHIO," a book which is already a classic. He has become a top bracket authority, universally recognized, in that field and his research on the movements of the Tories in the American Revolution is also highly authoritative. Boynton Merrill came in for a little to tell us of the First Congregational Church; and the campus of the University is now beyond praise or description for the number of its buildings; an academic city for which one needs a guide. But still at the heart of the campus is the old building in which for a score of years, with some help from two or three laboratories, the university trained men who harnessed Niagara and the Zambezi Falls and discovered the secret of getting the acoustics of a building right. (There is a memorial tablet to one of them in Boston Symphony Hall.) I wonder how much marble, brick and re-inforced concrete it takes to educate a boy or girl. The answer is not yet clear. But the magic of the campus renewed its spell. The seen and the unseen were there together which is also one of the mystic experiences of flying into vanished time, if there is any such thing as vanished time.

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Syracuse is considered no mean city in upstate New York. It is signal for us because my son Richard and his family are living there—the Quarterly occasionally publishes his wife's lovely and limpid verse—and three ascending steps of granddaughters who can play tunes on one's heart's strings. The last and littlest I baptized, and christened with my mother's name.

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After that a rocking New York Central train—eighteen cars long—was an anti-climax. Oh well, memory has its own wings, and what is over is only one thing more to possess.

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May is meeting time for Associations and other gatherings of the churches. They are always rich in comradeship, often notable addresses, revealing reports, resolutions of weight, and such other agenda as may be. For the most part the Congregational Christian Churches carry on in wise and simple ways, hallowed by use and wont. They are fortunate who share such meetings.